

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 TRSE-00 COME-00

OPIC-03 EB-08 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 AID-05 /112 W

-----021091 050210Z /62

R 042118Z MAY 78

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1154

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 01799

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PDIP, PEPR, CN, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S MEETING WITH COMORIAN FOREIGN
MINISTER MUZAWOIR ABDALLAH

REFS: (A) ANT 0697 (NOTAL) AND (B) ANT 0760 (NOTAL)

1. COMORIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MUZAWOIR ABDALLAH MET WITH
AMBASSADOR YOUNG FOR THIRTY MINUTES ON MAY 3. ABDALLAH
OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY EXPRESSING HIS PLEASURE AT
MEETING AMBASSADOR YOUNG. HE LAMENTED THE FACT THAT
VIRTUALLY THE ONLY USG OFFICIALS HITHERTO KNOWN TO THE
COMORIAN GOVERNMENT WERE ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE AND
ROBERT BARRETT, AND EXPRESSED HIS FERVANT HOPE THAT
BILATERAL RELATIONS ON BOTH A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
LEVEL WOULD BE DEVELOPED. ABDALLAH LAUDED PRESIDENT
CARTER'S AFRICAN POLICY AND HIS STANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

2. ABDALLAH STATED THAT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF MEETING YOUNG
WAS TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE, BOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL.
ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE ABDALLAH REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT
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BEFORE INDEPENDENCE, THE COMORIAN BUDGET WAS THIRTY-FOUR
MILLION DOLLARS: TWENTY-FOUR FROM FRANCE AND TEN GENERA-
TED BY THE ISLANDS THEMSELVES. THIS TOTAL HAS NOW DROPPED
TO APPROXIMATELY FIVE MILLION, NOT EVEN ENOUGH FOR THE
GOVERNMENT TO FUNCTION. MOST FRENCH BUSINESS CONCERNS
HAVE PULLED OUT, AND ALTERNATE FOREIGN INVESTMENT IS NIL.
THE SITUATION IS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY THE RETURN TO THE

COMOROS FROM MADAGASCAR OF THOUSANDS OF FORMER REFUGEES WHO HAVE NEITHER HOMES NOR JOBS. REPLYING TO A QUESTION FROM YOUNG, ABDALLAH SAID THAT NO AMERICAN INVESTMENT EXISTED ON THE ISLANDS. HE REQUESTED URGENT ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. TO ENABLE THE COMORIAN GOVERNMENT AND ECONOMY TO FUNCTION.

3. ABDALLAH SAID THE U.S. COULD ALSO HELP POLITICALLY. AS A FRIEND OF FRANCE, USG COULD PUT PRESSURE ON FRANCE TO HELP RESOLVE THE PROBLEM OF MAYOTTE. ABDALLAH ACCUSED GOF OF RENEGING ON EARLIER ACCORDS THAT WOULD HAVE GRANTED AUTONOMY TO THE WHOLE ("ENSEMBLE") OF THE ISLANDS. TO YOUNG'S QUESTION ABOUT THE REFERENDUM, ABDALLAH REPLIED THAT NINETY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE ISLANDS' POPULATION OF 350 THOUSAND HAD VOTED FOR INDEPENDENCE FROM FRANCE. ON MAYOTTE ITSELF, THE VOTE HAD SPLIT -- SIXTY-THREE PERCENT FOR/THIRTY-SEVEN PERCENT AGAINST. ABDALLAH REPEATEDLY UNDERSCORED, HOWEVER, THAT THE POPULATION OF MAYOTTE COULD NOT --BASED ON THE ABOVE-MENTIONED ACCORDS-- BE DISASSOCIATED FROM THAT OF THE COMOROS AS A WHOLE. HE ASKED RUEFULLY HOW WE COULD TAKE SUCH AN INTEREST IN NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE AND IGNORE THE COMOROS, WHO WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO ALLY THEMSELVES IN ALL RESPECTS WITH THE U.S.

4. YOUNG ASSURED ABDALLAH THAT USG IS CONCERNED WITH THE
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COMORIAN SITUATION. HE SUGGESTED THAT ABDALLAH CONTACT UNDP, UNICEF, AND UNHCR TO REQUEST ASSISTANCE, AND URGED HIM TO REITERATE THESE PROBLEMS IN HIS FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE. YOUNG ASSURED ABDALLAH THAT THE U.S. WOULD HELP THE COMOROS, BOTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY, IN WHATEVER WAY IT COULD. AT THE CLOSE OF THE MEETING, WHICH TOOK PLACE AT THE UN, A MISOFF PRESENT INFORMED ABDALLAH THAT UNFORESEEN EVENTS PRECLUDED BARRETT'S MEETING ABDALLAH IN NAIROBI ON MAY 8 (REFTEL B). YOUNG

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